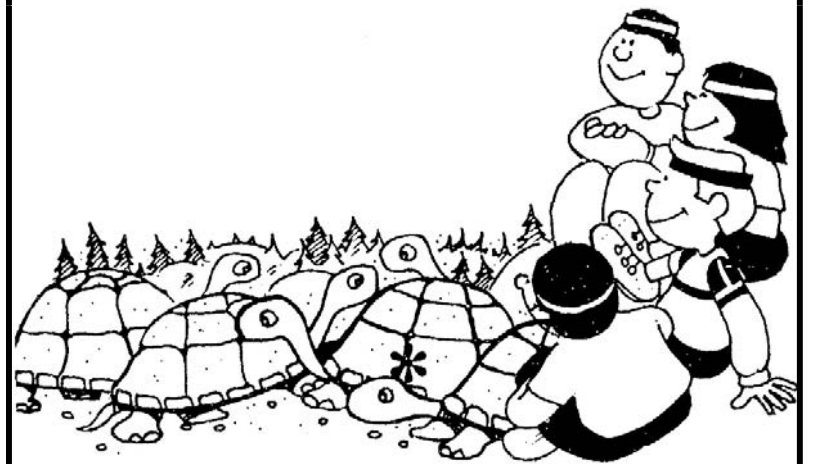




# Earthquake Legends



### **1. India**

The Earth is held up by four elephants that stand on the back of a turtle. The turtle is balance in turn on a cobra. When any of these animals moves, the Earth will tremble and shake.



### **20. West Africa**

A giant carries the Earth on his head. All the plants that grow on the Earth are his hair, and people and animals are the insects that crawl through his hair. He usually sits and faces the east, but once in a while he turns to the west (the direction earthquakes come from in West Africa), and then back to the east, with a jolt that is felt as an earthquake.



### **19. Romania**

The world rests on the divine pillars of Faith, Hope, and Charity. When the deeds of human beings make one of the pillars weak, the Earth is shaken.



### **2. Assam**

**(between Bangladesh and China)**

There is a race of people living inside the Earth. From time to time they shake the ground to find out if anyone is still living on the surface. When children feel a quake, they shout "Alive, alive!" so the people inside the Earth will know they are here and stop the shaking.



### **3. Mexico**

El Dia, the devil, makes giant rips in the Earth from the inside. He and his devilish friends use the cracks when they want to come and stir up trouble on Earth.



### **18. Central America**

The square Earth is held up at its four corners by four gods, the Vashakmen. When they decide the Earth is becoming overpopulated, they tip it to get rid of surplus people.



### **17. East Africa**

A giant fish carries a stone on his back. A cow stands on the stone, balancing the Earth on one of her horns. From time to time her neck begins to ache, and she tosses the globe from one horn to the other.



### **4. Siberia**

The Earth rests on a sled driven by a god named Tuli. The dogs who pull the sled have fleas. When they stop to scratch, the Earth shakes.



## **5. Japan**

A great catfish, or namazu, lies curled up under the sea, with the islands of Japan resting on his back. A demigod, or daimyoin, holds a heavy stone over his head to keep him from moving. Once in a while, though, the daimyoin is distracted, the namazu moves, and the Earth trembles.



## **16. New Zealand**

Mother Earth has a child within her womb, the young god Ru. When he stretches and kicks as babies do, he causes earthquakes.



### **15. Scandinavia**

The god Loki is being punished for the murder of his brother, Baldur. He is tied to a rock in an underground cave. Above his face is a serpent dripping poison, which Loki's sister catches in a bowl. From time to time, she has to go away to empty the bowl. Then the poison falls on Loki's face. He twists and wiggles to avoid it, and the ground shakes above him.



### **6. Mozambique**

The Earth is a living creature, and it has the same kinds of problems people have. Sometimes it gets sick, with fever and chills, and we can feel its shaking.



## **7. Greece**

According to Aristotle, (and also to Shakespeare, in the play called Henry IV, Part I) strong, wild winds are trapped and held in caverns under the ground. They struggle to escape, and earthquakes are the result of their struggle.



## **14. Columbia**

When the Earth was first made it rested firmly on three large beams of wood. But one day the god Chibchacum decided that it would be fun to see the plain of Bogota underwater. He flooded the land, and for his punishment he is forced to carry the world on his shoulders. Sometimes he's angry and stomps, shaking the Earth.





### **13. Latvia**

A god named Drebkuhls carries the Earth in his arms as he walks through the heavens. When he's having a bad day, he might handle his burden a little roughly. Then the Earth will feel the shaking.



### **8. Belgium**

When people on Earth are very, very sinful, God sends an angry angel to strike the air that surrounds our planet. The blows produce a musical tone which is felt on the Earth as a series of shocks.



### **9. Tennessee, USA**

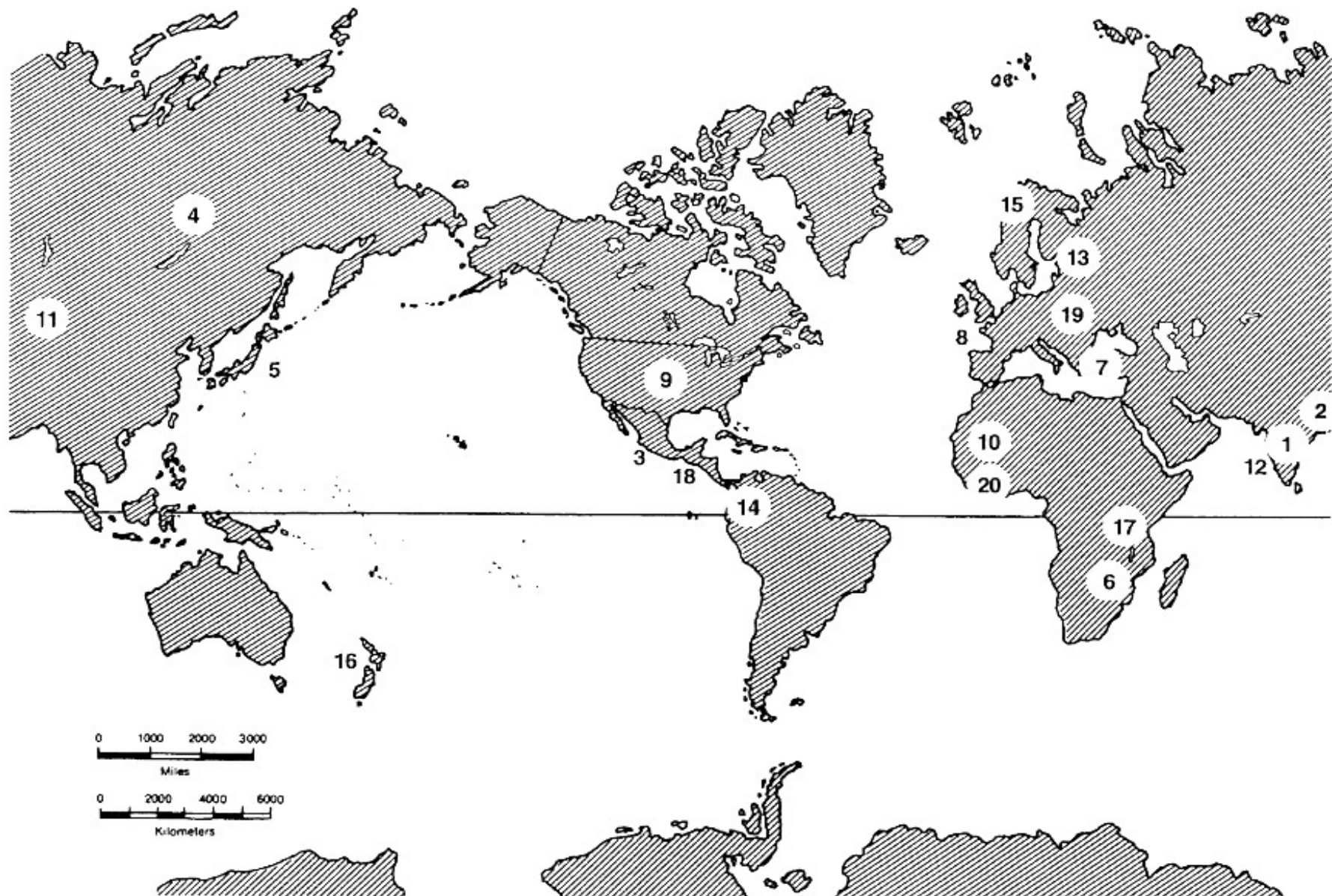
Once a Chickasaw chief was in love with a Choctaw princess. He was young and handsome, but he had a twisted foot, so his people called him Reelfoot. When the princess' father refused to give Reelfoot his daughter's hand, the chief and his friends kidnapped her and began to celebrate their marriage. The Great Spirit was angry, and stomped his foot. The shock caused the Mississippi to overflow its banks and drown the entire wedding party. (Reelfoot Lake, on the Tennessee side of the Mississippi, was actually formed as a result of the New Madrid earthquake of 1812.)

### **12. India**

Seven serpents share the task of guarding the seven sections of the lowest heaven. The seven of them take turns holding up the Earth. When one finishes its turn and another moves into place, people on Earth may feel a jolt.



## World Map with Legend Sites



### **11. Mongolia**

The gods who made the Earth gave it to a frog to carry on his back. When this huge frog stirs, the Earth moves directly above the part of him that moves: hind foot, head, shoulder, or whatever.



### **10. West Africa**

The Earth is a flat disk, held up on one side by an enormous mountain and on the other by a giant. The giant's wife holds up the sky. The Earth trembles whenever he stops to hug her.

